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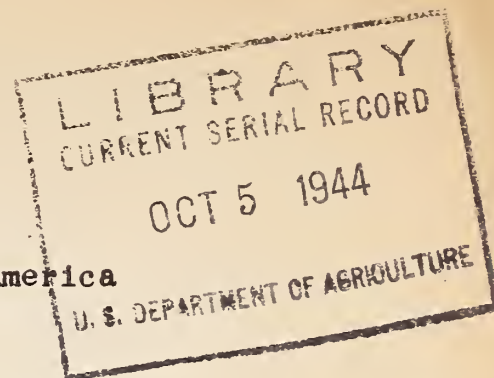


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## FIRE PREVENTION WEEK, 1944

By the President of the United States of America

### *A Proclamation*



Whereas the widening operations of our valiant armies and navies make it imperative that we exert our utmost effort to provide an increasingly abundant flow of goods and materials to every battle front; and

WHEREAS the prevention of waste is as essential to this end as is the production of goods; and

WHEREAS the waste occasioned throughout the Nation by preventable fires reaches a staggering total each year:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning October 8, 1944 as Fire Prevention Week.

I earnestly request every citizen to devote special thought and effort during Fire Prevention Week to detecting and eliminating fire hazards within his own control and to providing adequate protection against the waste of our fighting power through destruction by fire. I also request State and local governments, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, the National Fire Waste Council, business and labor organizations, educational and civic groups, and the various agencies of the press, the radio, and the motion-picture industry throughout the country to lend themselves to the stimulation of the public purpose to reduce and eliminate losses by preventable fire. I also direct the Department of Agriculture, the War Production Board, the protective services of the War and Navy Departments, and other appropriate agencies of the Federal Government to give the widest possible support and assistance to every effort to inform and instruct the public with respect to the possibilities and importance of the fire-prevention program.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this 17th day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and forty-four, and of the independence of the United States of America the one hundred and sixty-ninth.

S E A L

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

By the President:  
CORDELL HULL,  
Secretary of State



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF INFORMATION  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FOOD INFORMATION SERIES

September 19, 1944

No. 96

Subject: Fact Sheet on National Fire Prevention Week -- October 8-14, 1944

Distribution: War Board Members, AAA Committeemen, Extension Editors, OD Marketing Reports Chiefs, SCS, FSA, FCA Regional Information Chiefs, Office of Labor

Use: Background information.

FARM FIRES COST A REPORTED MONETARY LOSS OF \$95,000,000 A YEAR!

MORE THAN HALF OF THE \$145,000,000 LOSS TO INDUSTRIAL PLANTS IN 1943 OCCURRED IN FOOD PROCESSING AND FOOD STORAGE FACILITIES.

DESTRUCTION OF 12,000,000 bushels of grain in 1943 -- the average annual product of 12,000 grain farms -- is ONLY ONE item!

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NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK -- October 8 to 14, has been designated by the President of the United States in an effort to reduce the waste occasioned throughout the Nation by preventable fires -- made even more serious by the demands of war.

The United States Department of Agriculture has been requested, together with other government agencies, State and local governments, organizations, educational and civic groups and others, to help eliminate fire hazards and provide protection against the waste of our fighting power through fire's destruction. The program is not for the week's duration but should extend throughout the year.

The loss incurred through farm fires -- involving the destruction of food necessary for our fighting men and the Allied nations and liberated peoples -- is just one part of the national fire defense program. But it is an all-important part, for food is an all-important war weapon.

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HERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT  
FACTS ABOUT FIRE LOSSES

One huge mill and elevator fire in California in 1943 caused the loss of 3,000,000 bushels of grain alone. This would have furnished the bread ration of 600,000 soldiers for a year;--if it had been corn and fed to hogs, it would have meant the production of 15,750,000 pounds of pork.

In the United States, one home fire occurs every minute and a half and every 50 minutes, one person is burned to death.

In 1943, approximately 10,000 persons lost their lives in the United States as the result of fires. More than half of them were women and children. According to the National Fire Protection Association, 3,500 were farm people.

Total losses from fire in the U.S. in 1943 were 37% higher than in 1935.

Fire losses for the first six months of 1944 are reported as \$214,052,000. If this rate is continued through the year, 1944 losses will be 15% higher than 1943.

Each year, enough houses burn to shelter the entire population of the City of Los Angeles -- a population of about 1,600,000 people. One out of every 75 homes suffer from fire each

year. On the average, a fire will occur in EVERY home EVERY 75 years.

Four out of every five fires are the result of carelessness, and CAN BE PREVENTED. Carelessness in housekeeping, in rubbish and ash disposal, in handling matches and cigarettes, in mistreating electrical and heating equipment are leading fire causes.

FARM PROPERTY MORE THAN  
A QUARTER OF THAT LOST

In 1943, \$373,000,000 worth of property throughout the United States was destroyed by fire -- more than one quarter or \$95,000,000 of which was farm property. In 1942, \$21,000,000 worth of farm barns burned down and most of these barn fires resulted because of faulty lightning rods, improper hay storage and makeshift, or faulty, electrical wiring.

Fire on the farm is much more serious than in the city or town because:

- A. THERE IS GENERALLY NO TRAINED FIRE DEPARTMENT TO CALL FOR ASSISTANCE.
- B. THE NECESSARY WATER SUPPLY FOR FIGHTING FIRE IS IN MOST CASES NOT AS READILY AVAILABLE.
- C. FARM BUILDING CONSTRUCTION IS NOT AS FIRE RESISTANT AS IS CITY CONSTRUCTION.
- D. FARMERS CARRY LESS INSURANCE THAN CITY PEOPLE, WITH WHICH TO COVER FIRE LOSSES.

FIRES OFTEN OCCASION FOR  
GRADUAL ECONOMIC BREAKDOWN

In too many cases, a farm fire is the first stepping stone in the gradual, economic breakdown of a thriving farm unit. The loss of necessary feed supplies and the monetary cost involved in replacing the destroyed buildings are hurdles that many farmers -- no matter how enterprising and willing -- can never completely overcome.

Although farm fires during 1943 caused a reported monetary loss of \$95,000,000, the actual loss was much higher, because:

1. Most uninsured farm fire losses are never reported.
2. Most farm fire loss reports do not include the value of the farm crops destroyed.
3. The loss of productive capacity is not considered in farm fire reports. MOST CERTAINLY, THE DESTRUCTION OF A BARN, A SILO OR A FARM HOME HAMPERS THE FUTURE PRODUCTION FROM THAT FARM.

FIRES COST UNITED STATES  
\$1,000,000 A DAY ...  
10,000 LIVES A YEAR

TOTAL LOSS, \$438,000,000.

The total loss of the United States by fire during the calendar year of 1943 has been placed at \$373,000,000 by the National Fire Protection Association. This does not include forest fires which were estimated at causing a loss of \$65,000,000 ...

Of the total number of deaths from fire, percentages fall into these age groups:

Under 5 years	- 19 percent
5 to 14 years	- 9 percent
15 to 24 years	- 12 percent
25 to 44 years	- 23 percent
45 to 64 years	- 17 percent
Over 65 years	- 20 percent

Most of these lives were lost because of these following COMMON fire causes: (1) faulty electrical equipment; (2) smoking and matches; (3) defective heating equipment; (4) spontaneous ignition; and (5) defective chimneys.

**FOOD INDUSTRY FIRE LOSSES  
AFFECT MARKETING**

The loss of critically needed food processing and storage facilities, which equalled about one-fifth of the nation's entire fire destruction cost last year, may be irreplaceable, thus increasing the marketing problems of the farmer.

**HOW TO PUT OUT A FIRE**

The National Fire Protection Association, cooperating with the United States Department of Agriculture in the observance of National Fire Prevention Week, has the following suggestions to make to help farm folk and others put out any small fire that may start:

1. Collect your wits and size up the situation.
2. Notify the fire department if there is one available, then go into action with your own, RIGHT KIND of home extinguisher, immediately.
3. Take a position near a door so any sudden burst of flame can't trap you. Aim directly at the thing that is burning, except in the case of flammable liquid such as fats or gasoline. In this case, aim just above the level of the liquid to avoid splashing and spreading the flames.
4. In case of electrical fires, turn off the electric current. DON'T try to put out this type of fire with WATER or you will be subject to electric shock.
5. There are THREE CLASSES of fires, each one of which must be dealt with with a certain type of extinguisher. Water will not do for all of them. Provide your farm with those extinguishers for which you have the greatest need. Always seek the advice of your fire chief before purchasing fire extinguishers.

By "good housekeeping" practices on the farm, you can protect both your farm property and the foodstuffs you have produced. Inspect your farm now for fire hazards. Eliminate them and you will be doing your wartime job not only during Fire Prevention Week but throughout the whole year. Follow these suggestions:

1. Have readily available a ladder which will reach to the top of the highest buildings. (This is very important, very important.)
2. Where possible, see that there is a water supply for fire fighting purposes in the farm yard.
3. Establish firebreaks around haystacks, farm buildings, and maturing farm crops of high fire hazard.

**THE BEST WAY TO FIGHT A FIRE IS TO PREVENT IT FROM STARTING.**

**SUGGESTED MATERIAL ON FIRE PREVENTION**

Publications on the subject of fire prevention issued by the United States Department of Agriculture are as follows:

"Notebooks for Forest Fire Wardens, prepared by the Eastern Regional Forest Service, USDA"

Fireproof Construction on the Farm	#1590 F
Fireproofing Christmas Trees	193 L
Fireproofing Fabrics	1786 F
Fires on Farms	44 L
Fire Safeguards on Farms	1643 F
Safe Use and Storage of Gasoline and Kerosene on the Farm	1678 F
Protection of Buildings and Farm Property from Lightning	1512 F
Preventing Destructive Fires in Southern Woodlands	1926 F

The National Fire Protection Association has the following bulletins, folders, posters, and flyers for use in all types of programs during Fire Prevention Week:

Poster - "To Speed Victory - Prevent Fires" - for general purposes.  
Poster - "Feed Fighters, Not Fires!" - for farm and rural campaigns.  
Town Plaster - "To Speed Victory, Defeat Fire."  
Fire Prevention Week Flyer - "Shall We Win Victory Over Fire?"  
Fire Defense Quiz  
Folders - "Holy Smoke!" "13 Ways Not to Burn Your Home," "Put That Fire Out," "Trapped by Fire!" "Keep Your Home From Burning."  
Fire Prevention Week Handbook, 9th edition.  
"Facts About Fires" - Information for speakers and editors.

Other publications of special interest on fire prevention are as follows:

"Fire protection and prevention for summer homes in forest areas" published by the National Fire Protection Association.  
"National Fire Codes for Extinguishing and Alarm Equipment" published by the National Fire Protection Association.  
"National Codes for the Prevention of Dust Explosions" by the National Fire Protection Association.  
"The Prevention and Control of Farm Fires," a N.F.P.A. publication.  
"List of Inspected Fire Protection Equipment by Underwriters Laboratories."  
"List of Inspected Electrical Equipment, 1944, by the Underwriters Laboratories."  
"National Fire Codes for Flammable Liquids, Gases, Chemicals and Explosives," a National Fire Protection Association Publication.